

**Virginia HIV Community Planning Committee
Meeting Summary**

Members Present: Nathaniel Amos, Odile Attiglah, Mark Baker, Bill Briggs, Heather Bronson, Tomas Cabrera, Rhonda Callahan, Denise Clayborn, Dr. Rosalyn Cousar, Vontrida Custis, Hugo Delgado, Carrie Dolan, Gregory Fordham, Caroline Fuller, Richard Hall, Robert Hewitt, Martha Lees, Elaine Martin, Nicholas Mattsson, Dr. Joseph Riddick, Robert Rigby, Jr., Ruth Royster, Edward Strickler, Jr., Bruce Taylor, Silvia Villacampa

Members Absent: Dan Alvarez, Gium Mekonnen (represented), Paul Searcy (represented)

Other Attendees: Kathleen Carter, Khalid Kheirallah, Lindsey Mathews, Rachel Rees and Ryland Roane of the Virginia Department of Health; Debbie Camana of the Pennsylvania/Mid-Atlantic AIDS Education Training Center; Piper Moritz of the HIV/AIDS Resource and Consultation Center; Asheber Gebru of the Ethiopian Community Development Center (representing Gium Mekonnen); Janet Hall (representing Paul Searcy); Diane Johnson and Sandra Sitar of the Vaccine Research Center at the National Institutes of Health; Soraya Galeas of Planned Parenthood of Metropolitan Washington; Gloria McCall, visitor

Total of 38 attendees.

Welcome and Introductions

The meeting was called to order by Elaine Martin at 8:35 a.m.

New Business

- *Federal budget cuts* - Elaine Martin reported that the Surveillance Program lost funding for resistance tests and NHBS grants because of morbidity; Virginia is not one of the highest incidence states and grants were awarded to states with the highest morbidity rates. However, more money was awarded to Incidence and work will be expanding in that program. Work in the Medical Monitoring Program is ongoing, with a combination of interviews of people living with HIV and medical data records review. A total of 22 provider sites will be participating.
- *New Division Director* - Kathryn A. Hafford, who has been the Division of Disease Prevention's Acting Director since April 2007, has been promoted to Division Director and begins her new position today. Ms. Hafford began her public health career with VDH in 1977 in the Division of Nursing. She joined the Division of Disease Prevention (then the Bureau of STD Control) in 1988 as the Coordinator of STD/AIDS Education and Training. She went on to serve as the Director of Health Care Services and most recently as the Division's Deputy Director. The HIV prevention grant pays for part of the Division's deputy director position and this position will not be filled at this time.
- *General Assembly in session* – Elaine encouraged members to get the word out about HIV prevention funding cuts. Then she explained the distinctions of lobbying: it is “lobbying” when you refer to specific bills of legislation; it is “education” when you provide general information about a need or topic.

- *Ryan White Co-Chair Election* - Elaine opened the floor for any other nominations to add to the ballot which included two candidates who were nominated at the November meeting. After balloting, she announced that Mark Baker was chosen as the new co-chair.
- *Upcoming Events:*
 - Ryan White All-Grantee Meeting - Piper Moritz of the Virginia HIV/AIDS Resource and Consultation Center and the Debbie Camana of the Pennsylvania/Mid-Atlantic AIDS Education Training Center reported that their agencies, in collaboration with VDH, will host a Virginia Ryan White All-Grantee Conference in Richmond on Friday, April 4, 2008. This important educational program will be designed to assist all Ryan White providers with service delivery in a shrinking funding environment. The conference will provide opportunities to network with a variety of Ryan White program grantees and service providers and to enhance collaboration among the various parts. For additional information, contact Donna Cantrell at dlcantre@vcu.edu.
 - Gregg Fordham announced that a "Rally to End AIDS" is scheduled for January 20, 2008 at Myrtle Beach, South Carolina. The rally will consist of calls to action by activists and advocates representing the diverse communities affected by the HIV/AIDS epidemic. Issues will include access to care/services, science-based research, improved prevention tools, and ending stigma.

Call to Action

Members broke into small groups to discuss what data to collect, what kind of major theme or key message to use, and to develop a timeline. All ideas will be funneled to the Standards & Practices Subcommittee this afternoon. Elaine reminded everyone that money will be available in the new HIV testing grant for this project. A spokesperson from each group presented the group's viewpoints on what the document should look like, what the statements should be, what types of photos to include, and ways to produce positive and affirming messages so as not to make it too political or didactic in tone.

New Minority AIDS Projects

Ryland Roane reported awards have been made for the 2008 funding cycle of the Minority AIDS Projects (MAP) grant program. He stated that 17 proposals were received and eight contractors were awarded. The MAP grants focus on reaching racial ethnic minority populations (with an emphasis on Blacks and Latinos) in nine localities with high rates of HIV infection. The following agencies successfully competed for a total of \$750,000 under this Request for Proposals:

- 1) *AIDS Care Center for Education & Support Services (ACCESS)* will provide peer-driven, community-level interventions for transgender persons and youth in the Eastern region, including the cities of Norfolk, Portsmouth, Hampton, Newport News and Virginia Beach.
- 2) *Faith Community Baptist Church (FCBC)* will provide prevention services in the City of Richmond, concentrating on residents in housing communities including Creighton, Fairfield, Whitcomb, Mosby and Gilpin Courts.
- 3) *Health and Home Support Services, Inc. (HHSS)* will provide rapid HIV testing and group-level interventions at the Hampton Roads regional jail.
- 4) *International Black Women's Congress (IBWC)* will provide basic and intensive outreach and group level interventions in the Eastern region.

- 5) *Karing with Individuality (K. I. Services)* will provide HIV testing and individual and group level interventions in the Cities of Alexandria and Falls Church, and Fairfax and Arlington Counties.
- 6) *Minority Health Consortium (MHC)* will provide basic and intensive street outreach in the City of Richmond and the Crater Health District.
- 7) *Northern Virginia AIDS Ministry (NOVAM)* will provide prevention services to African American females, between the ages of 14-30, in Arlington and Fairfax Counties.
- 8) *Whitman-Walker Clinic of Northern Virginia (WWC)* will provide HIV prevention services in Alexandria, Arlington and Fairfax.

Elaine Martin urged agencies that did not get funded to contact VDH for technical assistance.

HIV Vaccine Research - Diane Johnson and Sandra Sitar of the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases' Vaccine Research Center (VRC) at the National Institutes of Health presented "The Critical Role for Minority Participants in HIV Vaccine Development." Ms. Johnson explained that the VRC has developed a productive working relationship with the Northern Virginia AIDS Ministry (NOVAM) and is actively doing outreach in northern Virginia and Maryland. She talked about some of the challenges facing HIV vaccine research and described the District of Columbia epidemiology profile, approaches to prevent HIV infection, some common misunderstandings, and the DNA replication process that is used to develop the vaccine (the HIV is completely synthetic and cannot replicate). Ms. Johnson noted that there have been several studies conducted in the past and that each study builds on the next, but the efficacy testing of HIV vaccines is complex and results can be confused by the media. Next she outlined the demographics of ongoing HIV vaccine trials, talked about the challenges of getting volunteers and barriers to participation (child care, fear of needles, stigma, time constraints, and chronic health problems). Methods of compensation were outlined and Ms. Johnson reported that although the District of Columbia population is generally used for practicality, a mobile clinic will be utilized beginning sometime in spring 2008. She urged interested parties to call toll-free 1-866-833-LIFE (5433) or e-mail VRCForLife@mail.nih.gov. The VRC is looking for healthy HIV-negative volunteers between the ages of 18-44. Complete physical examinations and blood work are done to determine eligibility.

Subcommittees Reports

►► Research Subcommittee – reported by Rosalyn Cousar, Ph.D.

Even though no research dollars are available at the present time, the consensus was to keep the committee going and work with data already in place. Ideas for future projects were 1) partnering with an on-going project such as the study of the effects of childhood sexual assault on risk behaviors and adults at AIDS Services Group; 2) present the subcommittee's research expertise to other agencies (Debbie Camana indicated there will be a research conference soon at VCU and she invited Elaine to participate and promote the subcommittee's expertise; 3) produce messages of comparative statistics to show the benefits and costs of HIV prevention in comparison to other state costs, e.g. bridge building and highway construction costs at VDOT; 4) collect data on effectiveness of interventions, such as SISTA; and 5) Have someone from CDC present on national incidence data. Dr. Cousar requested that Medical Monitoring Project (MMP) staff at VDH present at the next subcommittee meeting. The on-going MMP project will produce a nationally representative sample of individuals living with HIV/AIDS. The data will

be instrumental in providing enhanced planning and resource allocation for those in Virginia and nationwide who are infected with HIV. Martha Lees requested that the MMP questionnaire be distributed for review. Elaine Martin noted that the PEMS taskforce will look to see if there are local data use fields that we still want to collect (homelessness, methamphetamine use, etc).

►► **Standards and Practices** - reported by Rachel Rees

For the Call to Action to the African American community, the subcommittee devised a very different look from the ideas presented earlier in the day. Consensus was to have a brochure developed instead of a document and to have on the front four different “Virginia faces” who have been affected by HIV. They proposed also to have bullets showing why African Americans have been disproportionately affected.

Results of Year End Evaluation

Elaine reviewed the results and asked the members to provide feedback. She stated that a new year-end evaluation will be formulated in the future by the Research Subcommittee.

Services for Undocumented Immigrants

Elaine Martin reviewed the document, “The Impact of Immigration Status on Services Provided to VDH Clients,” to clarify recent public concerns that undocumented persons should be denied public services in Virginia. She reiterated that it is not necessary to have a social security number in order to receive health department services. It is better not to provide one than to steal, borrow or invent one, which is considered fraud.

Review of the November meeting summary

Motion was made and seconded to approve the minutes as written.

Planning for the March meeting

- 1) Elaine Martin will present on “Social Networking for HIV Prevention”
- 2) Ryan White and HIV/STD Integration & Testing Subcommittees will meet
- 3) Denise Clayborn will present on funding cuts at the Virginia Department of Mental Health, Mental Retardation and Substance Abuse Services (DMHMRSAS)

Main Meeting Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 3:15 p.m.

The Membership Committee met following adjournment of the full committee.

Elaine Martin, Community Co-Chair

Date

Kathleen Carter, Recording Secretary

Date